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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PRAGUE 000094

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [EZ](#)

SUBJECT: ODS SECOND-IN-COMMAND PETR NECAS AN IDEOLOGICAL  
COMPASS FOR PARTY AND GOOD FRIEND OF U.S.

REF: A. 04 PRAGUE 1845

[B](#). 04 PRAGUE 1857

[C](#). 04 PRAGUE 1877

Classified By: Political Officer Renata Sykorova Turnidge for reasons 1  
.4(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. The December 2004 election of main opposition Civic Democratic Party (ODS) long-time defense expert and ideological visionary Petr Necas to the number two position in the party strengthens Chairman Mirek Topolaneck's leadership team and bodes well for future direction of ODS. The two former rivals now form a powerful leadership tandem, and Topolaneck relies on Necas for guidance on security, defense, and foreign policy issues. Necas is clear, readable, and consistent in his conservative views and has considerable influence over the party's ideological development and direction. He is one of the main architects of the party's bold economic and social reform program being prepared for an ODS-led government in 2006. Necas differs from his party colleagues in his intolerant stance against corruption. A smart, articulate, principled, pro-Western and pro-American politician, Necas can be relied upon to be open and helpful in areas of mutual interest, as evidenced by his long-standing cooperation with the Embassy and helpful position on issues ranging from the Gripen tender to the deployment of Czech troops in Iraq. End Summary.

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Ideological Compass of ODS  
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[1](#)2. (C) Petr Necas is relatively young (40), but is a veteran in ODS, in which he has been active for the past 12 years. In contrast to Chair Mirek Topolaneck (to whom he lost the bid for party chair in 2002), who is known more for his "common touch" and ability to compromise, Necas is a thinker and a man of principles. Necas understood in the period following ODS's surprise defeat in the 2002 parliamentary election and subsequent departure of founder Vaclav Klaus that the party was at a crossroads. He has been advocating internal reforms to broaden ODS's voter base. At the party's December 4-5 Congress (ref A), Necas stressed that ODS should not rely solely on its traditional urban, professional supporters, but focus on reaching voters across the social spectrum, warning that ODS "did not want to be the party of the full wallet." He wants the ODS program to offer opportunities for all Czechs to move up the social ladder. Necas has also criticized the atmosphere of corruption created by the 1998 opposition agreement, to the dismay of other ODS members. He realizes that despite ODS's overwhelming electoral success in 2004, the party has to get beyond simply criticizing the Gross government and provide disenchanted voters with a genuine alternative. He has warned his colleagues not to underestimate Social Democratic (CSSD) Minister of Finance Bohuslav Sobotka's efforts to orient CSSD more to the center (ref B).

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Proponent of Political "Blitzkrieg"  
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[1](#)3. (C) Necas is one of the architects of the comprehensive ODS reform program, known as the "Blue Chance" that ODS plans to implement if, as expected, it forms the government after the 2006 elections. He advocates the quick introduction of overdue economic and social reforms (tax, social, health, education, and defense) so that the Czech economy and citizens will reap positive effects as soon as possible. He has urged the party to introduce concrete reform proposals to the public, despite worries from some party members that ODS will alienate voters if it unveils its reform plans ahead of the 2006 elections. He wants to make the Czech government more efficient and advocates eliminating some ministries to remove redundancies. Necas is also known to distrust Christian Democratic Union (KDU-CSL) leader Miroslav Kalousek: noting Kalousek's propensity to play both sides, Necas stated after Kalousek's election to the head of the party in 2003 that this was not a positive development for ODS.

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Party Unity Key  
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14. (C) Necas is a big proponent of party unity, urging his colleagues not to wash their dirty laundry in public as the CSSD tends to do. He views public bickering among party members as one of the threats to the party's expected victory in 2006. Necas, who was considered a favorite to become party chairman after Klaus's departure and was initially bitter about his loss to Topolaneck, has learned a lesson and uses himself as an example. Despite his loss to Topolaneck, Necas has become a loyal supporter, and Topolaneck increasingly relies on him, especially on foreign security issues and outreach to foreign diplomats. Necas has also overcome distrust of some party colleagues resulting from his last minute refusal to serve as interior minister in the 1997 Klaus government, and is much respected within the party.

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Defense Expert  
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15. (C) Necas has long served as the party's main voice on defense and security issues, working closely with shadow foreign minister Jan Zahradil. He was a vocal opponent of both tenders for the purchase of supersonic aircraft. He criticized the Spidla government's decision to lease the Gripen, pointing out the non-transparent nature of the selection process and the lack of consultations with opposition parties and NATO partners in such a strategic and costly issue. He has been the ODS champion of Czech participation in military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan and has always viewed Iraq as a priority. Most recently, Necas was crucial to winning ODS support for the latest extension of Czech troops in Iraq (ref C).

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Biographical Information  
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16. (U) Necas was born on November 19, 1964 in Uherske Hradiste, southern Moravia. He earned a doctorate in physics from the University of J.E. Purkyne in Brno in 1988. For the next four years he worked as a process engineer, senior research and development engineer, and research group chief for Tesla Roznov, a semiconductor firm. Necas has been a member of the ODS since its founding in 1991. He was elected ODS Deputy Chairman in 1999, and First Deputy Chairman in December 2004. He was first elected to parliament in 1992, where he served on the Chamber of Deputies Foreign Affairs Committee, specializing in foreign and security policy and European integration. He also chaired the delegations to the Interparliamentary Union and the WEU Assembly. Necas participated in a 1994 International Visitors program on foreign policy challenges. He was named First Deputy Defense Minister in 1995 and served in that capacity until July 1996.

In 1996 he was reelected to parliament, and served as Chairman of the Security and Defense Committee until 2002. A defense expert, Necas has been ODS shadow defense minister since 1998. Since September 2004, he serves as Vice Chairman of the European Integration Committee. He speaks English, Russian, and German. He is married and has four children. According to his official biography, he enjoys history, literature, classical music and sports, especially swimming and skiing.

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